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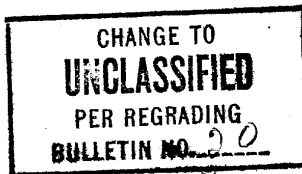
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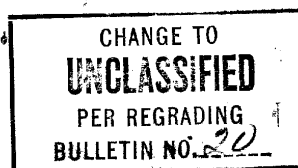
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CPW Report No. 32 -- USSR

(Apr. 15-28, 1952)

SUMMARY

May Day slogans get the usual heavy publicity. North Osetian history books and other publications are found to be ideologically faulty. The quarterly plan fulfillment figures issued by some of the Republics and smaller administrative areas present a familiar over-all picture of successes. Other regional transmissions, however, still harp on poor labor discipline and sloppy work, euphemistically referred to as lack of "production culture" (kultura proizvodstva). These strictures, on the other hand, are tempered by a somewhat greater emphasis on more consumer goods and better living conditions for the workers in general.



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CPW Report No. 32A

(Apr. 15-28, 1952)

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IDEOLOGICAL AFFAIRS

North Osetian Ideology Faltering: A report from Dzaudzhikau (17 Apr.) says that the oblast Party Committee held a plenary session to discuss "the state of ideological work" and the necessary measures for its improvement. Curiously enough, there is no mention in the report of any shortcomings discovered by the session but the measures taken to improve the "ideological situation" suggest that it calls for a great deal of official attention. This is corroborated also by a later PRAVDA report offering more details. The plenary session, which incidentally was attended also by the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Republican Prosecutor of North Osetian ASSR, relieved the Head of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of his duties and appointed another in his stead. Also removed from his post was the Chairman of the Republic's Council of Ministers Gazzayev. Although in this case the official reason given was "his departure for studies," it is also pointed out that he was relieved of the "obligations of membership of the Bureau of the North Osetian Party Committee. Another "assigned" to study elsewhere is the editor of the Republican newspaper RASSPINAR.

A dispatch to PRAVDA from Dzaudzhikau on 21 Apr. refers to the same Party session as having discovered "grave errors and shortcomings" (krupnie oshibki i nedostatki) in the Republic's ideological leadership. A number of books on Osetian history, language, literature and fine arts published in recent years, it is claimed, are replete with serious ideological mistakes and "distortions of a bourgeois-nationalist nature" (izvrashchenia burzhuzno-tatsionalisticheskago kharaktera). Thus Abayev's, "Origin and Cultural Past of Osetia", Skitsky's, "Outline of History of the Osetian People," and a number of others still "idealize the patriarchal-feudal period" (idealiziruyut patriarkhalno-feodalniy period) of Osetian history. An intimation that the Osetian men of letters and other intelligentsia are still manifesting a greater interest in their national past than in their Soviet present is seen in the reference to the current works of art and literature wherein "Soviet reality" (sovetskaya deistvitelnost) is "not properly portrayed" and the ideals of internationalism and friendship of the peoples of the USSR get very little space.

These historians and writers, on the other hand, are said to be unrestrained in their adulation of Osetia's patriarchal past. The Nart raids (nabegi nartov) on their neighboring nations are interpreted as justifiable while the epic poetry relating to the Nart period is "embellished in every way" (vsyacheski priukrashivayetsia). Having established that the Party Bureau and First Secretary Kulov "have manifested a liberal attitude" (proyavlyali liberalnoye otnoshenie) toward ideological errors and distortions, the dispatch concludes, the session took "practical measures" (prakticheskie meropriatia) toward their elimination.

Complaints that the local press is not doing its share in ideological campaigning and not working for a higher cultural level in general are heard in broadcasts from Kiev and Tbilisi. RADIANSKA UKRAINA (Apr. 17) blames "provincial isolationism" (khutoryanska obmezhnist) for the "astounding fact" that the oblast newspaper SOTSIALISTYCHNA KHARKIVSHCHYNA, which regularly reviews locally published books, has not printed "a single word" during the past 9 months on the works of the Stalin Prize winning Great Russian writers. This, says the paper, is all the more reprehensible since the dissemination of the outstanding literary works of the Great Russian writers is of great importance in the "political education of the masses" of the Union Republics and particularly of the Ukrainian SSR.

"Entirely unsatisfactory" reviews, from an ideological standpoint, are said to be published by the Odessa newspaper BOLSHEVISTSKOYE ZNAMYA, and varying degrees of delinquencies are ascribed to PRILARPATSKAYA PRAVDA, of Stanislav, and DUNAYSKAYA PRAVDA, of Izmail.

ZARYA VOSTOKA (Apr. 27) points to a number of (unnamed) papers of Georgian SSR as well as to itself as putting in "a poor performance" in the collective propaganda of the prevailing ideological and political line. The paper does not specify the "shortcomings and mistakes" to which it repeatedly refers, but insists that they be stopped at once and the "feeling of parade well being" (natroyenie paradnogo blagopoluchia) done away with. The Republican papers, it is implicitly admitted, have not served as an "example of Bolshevik vigilance" in the fight against the attempts of foreign agents to harm the Communist construction and to undermine the might of the Soviet State. Lack of contact with the masses is another failing against which the newspapers are cautioned, but the point is not amplified. The press, says the editorial, must not only teach the masses but also learn from them, and that cannot be achieved without closer ties between them.

The failure of the Ukrainian playwrights and writers to understand the full implication of "Socialist realism," says a report from Kiev on the presidium meeting of the Ukrainian Writers Union (Apr. 26), is the "main reason for the backwardness of Ukrainian Soviet playwrighting." Nothing of great artistic value, it is claimed, has been produced recently by the Ukrainian playwrights and scenario writers, and this is because they still underestimate the "role of conflict as the basis of dramatic work." As discussed in previous CPW reports, the so-called "no-conflict" theory (teoria bezkonfliktnosti) adopted by Ukrainian and other playwrights is frowned upon by the Party which regards that theory as an un-Bolshevik method of escaping possible damaging criticism. Denounced also, in this connection, is the timid suggestion of the Writers Union and the Commission on Dramatic Art that the struggle "between the good and the better", rather than conflict per se, should serve as a basis for Soviet stage plays. All this, says the report, reveals a misunderstanding of simple truths...a misinterpretation of Socialist realism. It is also intimated that the solution of this problem, among others, is item number one on the ideological agenda in view of the current preparations for the celebrations of the tercentenary of the Union of Ukraine with Russia.

"Handicraft stage production" (remeslennicheskie pyesy) and its concomitant non-ideological plays are sharply criticized by a Party-sponsored conference of producers and playwrights of Leningrad, according to a report carried by PRAVDA on Apr. 25 (not broadcast). The "no-conflict" theory is said to have taken hold of a number of Leningrad art workers with the result that their plays, particularly those on the working class, "suffer from onesidedness" (stradayut odnobokostyu) and "have nothing in common with the truth of life" (ne imeyut nichego obshchego s pravдой zhizni). Criticized also are the newspapers LENINGRADSKAYA PRAVDA and VECHERNIY LENINGRAD whose dramatic critics frequently are "people of little

knowledge and unqualified" (lyudi malosveduschchie, nekvalifitsirovannye). Favorable write-ups are often given to "obviously corrupt" (yavno porochnye) plays.

INDUSTRY

Consumer Goods Production Still Lagging: Of the three Republican quarterly reports available at this writing--RSFSR, the Ukraine and Armenian SSR--the latter appears to have put in the poorest production performance. Common to all of them, however, are high production indices in heavy industry and below-plan figures of consumer goods production. The lumber industry has been trailing behind the plan for the third year now, and scattered broadcasts on the subject indicate no improvement in 1952. The production of sawed lumber (pilomaterialy) for housing and other consumer uses has in fact dropped to a new low in Armenia, 88% of the plan, and industrial lumber to 82%. A similar drop is noted for the USSR as a whole--94% for 1951 to 86% for the first quarter of 1952. Food production--by the Ministry of Food, local and invalids' cooperatives--is almost uniformly behind plan. The same applies to the output of meat and dairy products, animal and vegetable fats, cheeses and a variety of other foodstuffs.

Lack of Labor Discipline and Production Culture: Labor discipline, says Veselov in PRAVDA on Apr. 21 (not broadcast), is still an unsolved problem even in some of the so-called efficient plants. Lack of such discipline means sloppy work, littered factory floor space and all-round confusion. The Vladimir Ilyich plant in Moscow, says the author, is a case in point. Of the 13 young workers recently assigned to the plant more than half have immediately "made themselves scarce" (otseyalis) and have not been seen again. The indifferent attitude to the newcomers on the part of the plant administration, Party and trade union organizations is said to have contributed to their disillusionment and eventually, to their decision to disappear. Although most of the young workers are Komsomol members not even the plant's Komsomol organization ever bothered to look into their training, personal needs or, for that matter, to include them in the organization itself. What inadequate care of the human element can do to a plant, says Veselov, may be seen at first glance at one or two of the shops:

...instruments are scattered all over the floor, the passageways are blocked with materials, cable spools, and what not. Incidentally, cleanliness and order are still lacking in the entire plant compound.

Russian version:

...v besporiadke valyautsia instrumenty, prokhody zagromozhdeny materialami, katushkami iz-pod provodov i vsiakoy vsiachiny. K slovu skazat, i na vsei-to territorii zavoda u nas eshche ne khvatayet poriadka i chistoty.

Lack of labor discipline is also said to account for the backwardness of a number of Uzbek plants which prefer to juggle production figures and show "good averages" rather than do something about tightening discipline (in Russian, Apr. 23). This practice of "whitewashing" (zamazyvanie) the bad work of some enterprises with the above-plan indices of leading plants is said to be un-Bolshevik and leading to eventual trouble. This accusation is reiterated by PRAVDA VOSTOKA (Apr. 24) with the demand that falsified average production figures be exposed and the situation remedied without delay: "Their bad work must not remain concealed behind average figures indicating economic successes."

Housing Shortage Still Acute: Reports from Bryansk Oblast, Altai Krai and elsewhere speak of the housing industry as the most neglected phase of Soviet economic activities. The USSR Ministry of the Building Materials Industry, rebuked by the Party on several previous occasions for its indifference to the workers' welfare, is again reminded by Ivakhnenko in PRAVDA that its performance in the matter of standard housing (standartnie doma) construction is far below expectations (Apr. 20). There is abundant evidence, says the author, that the Ministry shows little interest (malo zabotitsia) in stepping up production of standard houses. The contrary, in fact, is the case. A number of plant directors under the Ministry's jurisdiction have admitted that "an obviously reduced plan is under consideration" (namechayetsia

yavno zanizhenniy plan). As part of the richest Soviet timber country, Bryansk Oblast is said to present a picture of utter confusion. Oak, the most valuable construction lumber, is used for fuel while some of the most inferior types of wood are earmarked for construction purposes. The construction of prefabricated houses (sbornie doma) has not even reached the blueprint stage, and no steps are being taken toward the production of plywood (fanera).

Cited as an interesting sidelight on the planless lumber business is the fact that timber is exported from and imported to Bryansk Oblast at the same time:

One cannot understand why it is necessary to export lumber from Bryansk Oblast and in turn import this raw material from thousands of kilometers away, overloading the railroads with unnecessary and costly haulage and considerably increasing production costs!

Russian version:

Neponiatno, zachem nuzhno vyvozit drevesinu iz Bryanskoy oblasti i vzamen za tysyachi kilometrov privozit syrye, zagruzhaya nenuzhnymi, dorogostoyushchimi perevozkami zheleznodorozhniy transport, znachitelno uvelichivaya sebestoimost produktsii!

A Karamyshev report from Barnaul, Altai Krai (Apr. 21, not broadcast), says that housing construction and the municipal economy of that krai capital in general are "in a state of negligence" (v zapushchennom sostoyanii). The workers' welfare and daily amenities have not kept pace with the city's expansion. Nothing is being done to improve and expand the water supply system (vodoprovod), there are all too few public bath houses and those in operation are not functioning properly. Even the baking and distribution of bread by the city's only bread trust is subject to unexplainable continuous interruptions. The head of the largest town department store is said to have "surrounded himself with yes-men" (okruzhil sebia podkhalimani), and his unworthy behavior (nedostoynoye povedenie) is held responsible for the violations of the rules of Soviet trade. (There is no indication, however, as to the nature and extent of those violations). Karamyshev is at a loss to understand why, although the RSFSR Council of Ministers is well aware of the chaotic situation in Barnaul and has, in fact, officially rebuked the chairman of the City Soviet for it, things are still allowed to go on as they have.

PRAVDA (Apr. 28) discusses the improving welfare of the Soviet people in familiar laudatory terms but admits that its praise does not apply to all the places or all the people. This, it says, is particularly true of housing:

The failure to fulfill the housing plans in some towns and settlements, and the unsatisfactory work of enterprises and establishments which provide services for the working people cannot be tolerated.

Industrial leadership in Krasnoyarsk Krai is not what it should be, according to PRAVDA (Apr. 25). The same is said to apply to the krai Party Committee which "manifests a tolerant attitude" (terpimo otnositsia) toward the existing shortcomings. The Party, whose duty it is to exercise over-all control over industrial activities, is apparently not looking beyond average production indices which often cover a multitude of sins. The paper reemphasizes the duty of all Party organizations to look into every phase instead of being satisfied with statements and reports: "The krai Party Committee does not see the grave shortcomings behind the average figures of plan fulfillment..." (Za srednimi pokazateliymi vypolnenia plana kraikom partii ne vidit krupnykh nedostatkov...)

ZARYA (Apr. 15) discusses the inefficiency of the Dniepropetrovsk Oblast construction organizations and the "great losses" (velyki vtraty) they are incurring. The Dzerzhinsk-Bud construction trust alone lost 2,775,000 rubles last year through inefficient utilization of machines, and this year its losses "already exceed" 100,000 rubles. The paper is highly critical of the "vicious practice" of hoarding raw materials and creating reserves over and above the prescribed level (normativ). The Dzerzhinsk cement factory, Dniepropetrovsk metallurgical equipment plant (zavod metalurginogo ustatkovannya) and a number of unnamed other enterprises are mentioned as being guilty of such violations.

RADYANSKA UKRAINA (Apr. 15) wants to know why so many enterprises of the Ukrainian Ministry of the Building Materials Industry are still failing to utilize their productive capacity. Such failures are particularly conspicuous at some cement and brick-making plants where production has dropped below last year's figures. Other plants, such as the new and modern Kharkov ball-bearing works (Kharkivskiy shariko-podshypnikoviy zavod) for example, even registered a drop in labor efficiency--4% below the planned figure for last year. The utilization of productive capacity is said to be "particularly bad" at the building materials industry enterprises of Voroshilovgrad, Dnepropetrovsk, Transcarpathia, Kiev and Stalino oblasts.

KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA (Apr. 19) says that economy and thrift are not characteristic of the operation of all the Republic's industrial enterprises. To achieve that, the paper declares, the "initiative of the masses" must be encouraged and developed, but this is precisely what "some enterprise heads" are not doing. Some of the industrial enterprises indeed go so far as to tolerate both poor production quality and rising costs at the same time. Cited as extreme examples of such delinquency are the Kazakh agricultural machine-building plant at Akmolinsk (Akmolinskiy zavod Kazakh-Selmash), the Balkhash State Fish Trust (Balkhashskiy gosrybtrest) and the East Kazakhstan State Fish Trust (Vostochno-kazakhstanskiy gosrybtrest). Stressing the important part of plant accountants and bookkeepers in the struggle against waste and unaccountable losses of raw material, the paper urges them to "vigilantly defend the State interests" and do everything they can to bring about greater economy and a more "sparing use" of materials.

MISCELLANEOUS

A TASS transmission to Europe (Apr. 17) quotes Patriarch Alexius' Easter message to all Russia which refers to the current peace campaign as a Christian cause, and to the enemies of peace as Christians in name but not in spirit: "We are happy that our country stands at the head of this truly Christian cause."

Mortality Zero: A Speransky article in IZVESTIA (Apr. 17) ridicules the "reactionary theories" of bourgeois pediatricians who endeavor to justify high child mortality in capitalist countries by "racial symptoms or biological reasons" and ignore social causes. We are convinced, says Speransky, that due to the growing well being of the Soviet population and the development of medical science "child mortality in the USSR will approach the zero mark."

Tracer Atoms: A Home Service report of Apr. 18 says that scientists Simonov and Leonov obtained, with the aid of tracer atoms (trassiruyushchie atomy), important data on the feeding of oak, apple tree, raspberry, lemon, tea and other plants with phosphorus. The development of artificial photosynthesis and other sources of light capable of replacing sunlight is credited to Soviet scientists, according to a broadcast to Europe on Apr. 18. Experiments have established, says the report, that in several cases artificial light affects the development of plants more favorably than natural light.

New Insulating Material: "Set foam" (zastyvshaya pena), says a broadcast from Moscow on Apr. 27, is a new insulating and sound-proofing material development by Soviet scientists. One cubic meter of this material weighs only 15 kilograms and is at least 50 times lighter than water. It can be used as "an excellent heat insulator" in the refrigeration industry, and will be able to replace cork in numerous floating devices.

A report from Stalinabad (in Russian, Apr. 21) refers to the "liquidation of Stalinabad Oblast" (likvidatsia stalinabadskoy oblasti) and its various Executive Committees under Article 80 of the Tadzhik Constitution. An appropriate amendment to the Constitution has been approved by the current session of the Republican Supreme Soviet. The latter, says the report, has also approved the Presidium decrees "concerning the administrative and territorial division of the Republic" (kasayushchikhsia administrativno-territorialnykh deleniy respublik). No further details are offered.

A sizable increase in the population of the Safonovo workers' settlement, Smolensk Oblast, is indicated in a Smolensk broadcast of Apr. 16 saying that by decree of the Byelorussian Presidium, Safonovo has been "transformed into a town" under oblast jurisdiction.